Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) Solid phase extraction process for extracting an analyte from a sample comprising one or more of the following steps:

a) conditioning a sorbent in a cartridge by passing a liquid suitable for conditioning through the cartridge;

b) applying a sample that contains the analyte to the sorbent by passing a liquid which contains the sample through the cartridge;

c) washing the sorbent by passing a wash liquid through the cartridge;

d) eluting the analyte from the sorbent by passing an elution liquid through the cartridge,

wherein the temperature of the cartridge is raised or lowered ~~to a predetermined value~~ at a rate greater than 5°C/min during one or more of the steps a) to d), and

wherein the temperature of the cartridge is raised or lowered at a rate greater than 5°C/min by heating or cooling one or more of the liquids used in step a) to d) before feeding to the cartridge.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) Solid phase extraction process according to Claim 1, wherein the temperature of the cartridge is raised or lowered in step a), ~~preferably~~ by heating or cooling the liquid for conditioning of the sorbent.

4. (Currently Amended) Solid phase extraction process according to Claim 1, wherein the temperature of the cartridge is raised or lowered in step b), ~~preferably~~ by heating or cooling the liquid which contains the sample.

5. (Currently Amended) Solid phase extraction process according to Claim 1, wherein the temperature of the cartridge is raised or lowered in step c), ~~preferably~~ by heating or cooling the wash liquid.

6. (Currently Amended) Solid phase extraction process according to Claim 1, wherein the temperature of the cartridge is raised or lowered in step d), ~~preferably~~ by heating or cooling the elution liquid.

7. (Currently Amended) Solid phase extraction process according to Claim 1, ~~which also~~ wherein the process further comprises the step of drying the cartridge, before or after one or more of the steps a) to d), drying being carried out by passing a suitable gas through the cartridge, wherein the gas is heated prior to feeding to the cartridge.

8. (New) Solid phase extraction process according to Claim 1, wherein the temperature of the cartridge is raised or lowered at a rate greater than 50°C/min during one or more of the steps a) to d).

9. (New) Solid phase extraction process according to Claim 1, wherein the temperature of the cartridge is raised or lowered at a rate greater than 50°C/min by heating or cooling one or more of the liquids used in step a) to d) before feeding to the cartridge.

10. (New) Solid phase extraction process according to Claim 1, wherein the heating or cooling of the one or more liquids used in steps a) to d) comprises heating with the use of a heating device having a heat capacity sufficient to heat the one or more liquids used in steps a) to d) from 20°C to 100°C with a flow rate of 1 mL/min of liquid in 10 seconds or less.

11. (New) Solid phase extraction process according to Claim 9, wherein the heating or cooling of the one or more liquids used in steps a) to d) comprises heating with the use of a heating device having a heat capacity sufficient to heat the one or more liquids used

in steps a) to d) from 20°C to 100°C with a flow rate of 1 mL/min of liquid in 5 seconds or less.

12. (New) Solid phase extraction process according to Claim 9, wherein the solid phase extraction process comprises an injection pump with a capacity that allows for the injection pump to take the entire amount of liquid required for one of steps a) - d) and inject the liquid into a line system with an uninterrupted delivery stroke.